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BOOK REVIEWS AND NOTICES

The Management and the Worker. By GEORGE F. JOHNSON AND OTHERS. A. W. Shaw Company, 1920. Pp. 228.

Companion volumes:

The Way to Greater Production. By HOMER S. TRECARN AND OTHERS. Pp. 252.

Working Conditions, Wages, and Profits. By C. W. PRICE AND OTHERS. Pp. 254.

These three volumes comprise a collection of articles written by various business men upon the policies and practices of the organizations they represent. The work of co-ordinating and supervising has been done by such men as F. F. Beall, G. L. Avery, R. A. Feise, W. J. Kilpatrick, Henry S. Dennison, A. Kauffman, W. E. Clow, F. D. Pitt, and George M. Verity, of the Editorial Advisory Board of *Factory, The Magazine of Management*.

The editorial staff is to be praised for the success achieved in relating the articles and securing some degree of sequence in the development of the subjects undertaken. In this series of three volumes written by a score of individuals is every possibility of repetition, contradiction, suggestion, dogmatism, education, misdirection, and inspiration. Experiences are drawn from Endicott, Johnson and Workers, Incorporated, The International Harvester Company, The Detroit Sulphite Paper and Pulp Company, The White Motor Company, The National Cash Register Company, The Packard Motor Car Company, The Cortland Electric Company, and as many as twenty others. W. S. Rogers explains how the Bantam Ball Bearing Manufacturing Company has arrived at a distribution of responsibility and authority which avoids "passing the buck." P. W. Litchfield tells about the Goodyear Flying Squadron as a device to protect against slow-downs and tie-ups in production; Samuel Gompers speaks for organized labor; others indicate that their methods have kept the unions out; and so throughout the three volumes is a motley of testimony upon every conceivable topic in the field of industrial relations—"loss by fatigue," "speeding the workers up," "health from the dollars-and-cents standpoint," "what to do with non-productive labor,"

"labor costs and losses," "a way to measure labor efficiency," "profit sharing analyzed," "how to increase output with from 10 to 30 per cent less help," training, hiring, firing, keeping records, what not. Here it all is. The task of securing a degree of orderliness was assuredly a severe one.

Less can be said, however, for the quality of the materials. Each chapter is based upon the concrete experience of a particular business firm. It is actual, but it is far from final. That there is material for guidance in the experience of various business institutions as recited in these books cannot be denied. It is through the analysis of just such cases that progress will be made. The real question so far as these volumes go is whether the recital in each particular case is sufficiently comprehensive to expose both the strength and limitations of particular methods. For, granted that a particular plan has been successful, and granted that success has not been proclaimed until it proved itself to be more than temporary, there is still need of caution. The same procedure in different hands, or under conditions but slightly at variance, might lead to disastrous effects. At best, any plan is merely suggestive, and to secure proper rather than improper guidance, it is necessary to understand the background into which the plan has been worked. Analysis, minute and comprehensive, should back up the recital of the method used to meet each problem in each particular plant. And this analysis is lacking.

Greater promise of making progress would seem possible if more attention had been given to a consideration of why the worker in industry is unwilling to co-operate whole-heartedly with management rather than bringing forward a continuous reel of "these are the methods that worked in the X, Y, and Z companies." Understanding must precede method. Not least among that which must be understood is the worker—his fears, his likes, his prejudices, his desires. Although some of the articles tell how production was greatly increased by particular methods, it is all too evident that the ends achieved are the results of an aggressive personality combined with an understanding that has progressed little beyond the stage of slapping men on the back and calling them by their first names. All of which is worth something if there is actual good will present, just as a platter of meat is often made more appetizing when decorated with parsley, but the substance is in the steak. A study of the worker in terms as broad as society itself is a task which is worthy of the best student of production. The results of such a study might influence profoundly the value to be attached to certain prevailing practices of control.

Recognition should be given to the fact that the editors appreciate somewhat the limitations of such compilations as these three volumes represent; and a warning is given from time to time that the conclusions of a particular writer are based upon his own experience and need not necessarily be subscribed to by others. Also, there are some articles which do constitute real contributions in the fields to which they are addressed. Among these, chapter xii of *The Way to Greater Production*, written by Windsor T. White and E. W. Hulet of the White Motor Company, is a thoughtful analysis of the function of management in relation to the workers.

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Life and Labor in the Nineteenth Century. By C. R. FAY.
Cambridge University Press, 1920.

This volume contains the substance of a series of lectures delivered at Cambridge University in 1919 to students in economics, among whom were students from the United States Army. The vagueness of its title conveys a very fair idea of the vagueness of its point of view. It deals in the main with industrial and social problems in nineteenth-century England. The first two-thirds of it contains a fairly consistent account of English industrial problems down to 1850. After that its author wanders off into a series of more or less disconnected essays on mining operations, the historical basis of capitalism, the co-operative movement, and such like. One can hardly resist the surmise that, like many another college lecturer, Mr. Fay planned his series on too large a scale and after getting halfway through found his time running short and crowded into the last few lectures his observations on matters of particular interest to him. And yet his book is most illuminating in those chapters where he gets off the beaten track. What he says about Cobbett and Cobden and the beginnings of English socialism and the Anti-Corn Law League has been much better said elsewhere. On Chartism he is distinctly weak. Not many students will agree with his statement that Chartism was, in its last analysis, a religious movement. On the other hand, his account of the English co-operative movement since 1844 is unusually good, and his chapters on the "Historical Basis of Capitalism" make a contribution of real importance to the understanding of that subject. They furnish a badly needed antidote to Hobson's *Evolution of Modern Capitalism*. The spirit of them is so admirably expressed in a concluding paragraph that it is worth quoting in full: